

presenting to the applicant a collection of questions related to life history information, the life history information comprising more than one life event, the question collection being comprised of a revealed stem question and at least one hidden branch question, the hidden branch question being related to the stem question; receiving from the applicant a response to the stem question and storing the stem question response in a computer database; based on the stem question response, automatically determining whether to present the at least one hidden branch question to the applicant; if the at least one hidden branch question is to be presented to the applicant, revealing the branch question to the applicant, receiving from the applicant a response to the branch question and storing the branch question response in the computer database; and wherein the response to the stem question and the response to the hidden branch question are relevant to predicting a predefined negative outcome for the applicant.

10. (Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the response to the at least one stem question is comprised of descriptive information.
12. (Amended) The method of claim 11, wherein the negative indicator is a critical item.
13. (Amended) The method of claim 12, wherein the occurrence of the negative indicator is relevant to predicting the predefined negative outcome for the applicant.
15. (Amended) A computer readable medium comprising software for acquiring life history

information from an applicant for employment to minimize positive response bias and enhance the veracity of the acquired life history information, wherein the software instructs a computer to:

present to the applicant a collection of questions related to life history information, the life history information comprising more than one life event, the question collection being comprised of a revealed stem question and at least one hidden branch question, the hidden branch question being related to the stem question; receive from the applicant a response to the stem question and storing the stem question response in a computer database; based on the stem question response, automatically determine whether to present the at least one hidden branch question to the applicant; if the at least one hidden branch question is to be presented to the applicant, reveal the branch question to the applicant, receiving from the applicant a response to the branch question and storing the branch question response in the computer database; and wherein the response to the stem question and the response to the hidden branch question are relevant to predicting a predefined negative outcome for the applicant.

17. (Amended) The computer readable medium of claim 15, wherein the negative indicator is a critical item.

25. (Amended) The computer readable medium of claim 15, wherein the applicant is an applicant for law enforcement, criminal justice or public safety employment.

26. (Amended) The computer-readable medium method of claim 15, wherein the predefined outcome is an objective outcome.

27. (Amended) The computer readable medium of claim 15, wherein the predefined outcome is a negative outcome.

28. (Amended) The computer readable medium of claim 15, wherein the predefined negative outcome is an objective outcome.

29. (Amended) The computer readable medium of claim 28, wherein the predefined objective, negative outcome is the applicant's failure to complete training.

30. (Amended) The computer readable medium of claim 28, wherein the predefined objective, negative outcome is the applicant's receipt of a predefined disciplinary action.

31. (Amended) The computer readable medium of claim 28, wherein the predefined objective, negative outcome is notification of a performance deficiency.

Please add the following claims:

47. (New) The computer readable medium of claim 15, wherein the response to the at least one stem question is comprised of descriptive information.

49. (New) The computer readable medium of claim 15, wherein the response to the at least one hidden branch question is relevant to at least one negative indicator.

50. (New) The computer readable medium of claim 49, wherein the negative indicator is a critical item.

51. (New) The computer readable medium of claim 50, wherein the occurrence of the negative indicator is relevant to predicting a predefined outcome for the applicant.

52. (New) The computer readable medium of claim 15, wherein the stem question response cannot be altered by the applicant after completion of the question collection.

53. (New) A computer-based system for acquiring life history information from an applicant for employment to minimize positive response bias and enhance the veracity of the acquired life history information, comprising:

a user interface for:

presenting to the applicant a collection of questions related to life history

information, the life history information comprising more than one life

event, the question collection being comprised of a revealed stem question

and at least one hidden branch question, the hidden branch question being related to the stem question;

receiving from the applicant a response to the stem question and storing the stem question response in a computer database;

a computer processor that:

automatically determines whether to present the at least one hidden branch question to the applicant based on the stem question response;

if the at least one hidden branch question is to be presented to the applicant, reveals the branch question to the applicant, receiving from the applicant a response to the branch question and storing the branch question response in the computer database; and

wherein the response to the stem question and the response to the hidden branch question are relevant to predicting a predefined negative outcome for the applicant.

54. (New) The computer-based system of claim 53, wherein the negative indicator is a critical item.

55. (New) The computer-based system of claim 53, wherein the applicant is an applicant for law enforcement, criminal justice or public safety employment.

56. (New) The computer-based system of claim 53 wherein the predefined outcome is an objective outcome.

57. (New) The computer-based system of claim wherein the predefined outcome is a negative outcome.

58. (New) The computer-based system of claim 57, wherein the predefined negative

outcome is an objective outcome.

59. (New) The computer-based system of claim 58, wherein the predefined objective, negative outcome is the applicant's failure to complete training.

60. (New) The computer-based system of claim 58, wherein the predefined objective, negative outcome is the applicant's receipt of a predefined disciplinary action.

62. (New) The computer-based system of claim 58, wherein the predefined objective, negative outcome is notification of a performance deficiency.

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63. (New) The computer-based system of claim 53 wherein the predefined negative outcome is selected from the group consisting of an employment event, a criminal event and a substance event.

64. (New) The computer-based system of claim 53, wherein the response to the at least one stem question is comprised of descriptive information.

65. (New) The computer-based system of claim 53, wherein the response to the at least one hidden branch question is relevant to at least one negative indicator.

66. (New) The computer-based system of claim 53, wherein the negative indicator is a critical item.